

FROM THE OFFICE OF:
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SPEECH OF REPRESENTATIVE LESLIE C. ARENDS, (R.Ill.)
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER OF THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE, ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE, CONCERNING THE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important agencies of our Government, particularly during this period of international uncertainties and anxieties, is our Central Intelligence Agency.

The time has long since arrived when someone should take cognizance of the baseless criticism that has been and continues to be heaped upon it. That is my purpose here today, as a member of the CIA Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services since its establishment. I do not purport to speak as an authority on all the functions and activities of the CIA. But I do presume to speak with some factual knowledge about the CIA as an organization and how it functions.

I do not mean to imply that the CIA should be above criticism. No agency of government should be above criticism. Constructive criticism makes for improvement, and there is always room for improvement.

But much of the criticism directed at the CIA is not constructive. It cannot possibly be, as it is not based on facts. It is based on half-truths and distortions. Indeed, some of it constitutes complete untruths, with no foundation whatever in fact or in reason. This is what concerns me. Something once said, however false, is readily accepted and believed.